

Approved For Release 2002/07/23 : CIA-RDP80-00810A003900030001-5

# INFORMATION REPORT

REPORT NO. 003900030001-5  
CD NO.

COUNTRY Poland

DATE DISTR. 28 May 1954

SUBJECT      **Oswiecim Chemical Plant in Dwory near Oswiecim**

NO. OF PAGES 6

PLACE  
ACQUIRED

NO. OF ENCLS.  
(LISTED BELOW)

DATE OF INFO.

SUPPLEMENT TO  
REPORT NO.

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**SOURCE**

1. The Chemical Plant in Dwory (Q 51/Y 74) was east of Oswiecim (Auschwitz) (Q 51/Y 74) south of the Vistula River and south of the railroad line connecting Oswiecim and Krakow (Q 51/Z 24). The plant extended west-east about 5 kilometers and north-south about 1 km. A marshalling yard was in its eastern section on the Oswiecim-Skawina-Krakow railroad line (Q 50/X 49). All railroad lines, including the junction railroads between the plant and Oswiecim, were double-track lines. Since the Vistula River was unnavigable near Dwory there was no waterway connection.<sup>1</sup>
2. The plant, which was built by the German IG Farbenindustrie A.G. (Corporation) from 1942 to 1944, produced synthetic gasoline, buna and derivatives of coal. Some parts of the plant were dismantled by the Soviets at the end of World War II. Others were blasted. The gasoline plant was spared. The Poles gradually rebuilt the plant with Soviet and foreign aid, including aid by French firms. The Poles did not, however, exploit the plant to capacity.
3. The plant was subdivided by 5 west-east roads with north-south crossroads which gave the plant a chessboard-like appearance. The manufacturing shops were wide apart and arranged in a manner that no fire or explosion could extend to another manufacturing shop. The manufacturing shop and the management buildings and laboratories were in the western plant area. The chemical warehouses and a marshalling yard were in the eastern plant area. Each production shop of the plant had two west-east railroad tracks along the longitudinal roads. Plant railroad carried the workers to their working places from the west. The terminus of this railroad was at the phenol installation. Although the Poles had expanded the marshalling yard in Oswiecim for the plant, goods destined for places in the area of Katowice had to be shipped via Oswiecim.
4. The plant had a power plant which was in poor condition. Its boilers needed repair and could not be replaced. The plant was connected to the Upper Silesian high-voltage network, which also supplied the Vitkovice district (CSR) in addition to the Upper Silesian industrial district. All workshops had steam heating installations.<sup>2</sup>
5. Production included the manufacture of synthetic gasoline, low-temperature carbonization of pit coal, the manufacture of phenol, trichloro-ethylenes, methanol and chloric benzol. On 30 September 1952, synthetic gasoline was produced at a daily rate of 100 tons. The low-temperature carbonization plant had partially been rebuilt by the Lurgi

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firm in Frankfurt/Main in 1951 and 1952. This firm also repaired components of the plant, which had not been entirely destroyed. Two of six low-temperature carbonization plants were in operation in September 1952. The individual daily capacity of the carbonization furnaces was between 180 and 200 tons. Until the spring of 1952, distilled products of the carbonization process were drained into a ditch because they did not sell. In the early summer of 1952, the production of this installation could be marketed. A new installation with a daily capacity of 10 tons of phenol was completed on 30 September 1952. It had been delivered by Krebs and Co, a Paris technico-chemical engineering firm. Its capacity was not exploited because of the lack of 100 percent soda lye. NaOH was obtained from the only mercury cell plant in Poland. The trichloric ethylene plant, which had been constructed by the Poles, needed carbide from other countries. Its daily capacity was between 5 and 8 tons. A carbide plant was planned but could not be built for lack of current.<sup>2</sup>

6. The methanol plant, which had been assembled in Germany, was dismantled by the Soviets, sent to the USSR and resold to the Poles in 1951. In late September 1952 its assembly was not completed except for the installations for the production of acetaldehyde and acetic anhydride. The formaldehyde plant belonging to the methanol plant was said to have been ordered from firms in West Germany.
7. The chloric benzol plant produced at a rate of 5 tons daily. Its production was allegedly scheduled to be delivered to a chemical plant in Tarnowskie Gory (Q 51/Y 49).<sup>3</sup>
8. The plant was subordinate to a central administration in Gleiwitz (Gliwice). Sobiranski (fnu), was managing engineer. During the rebuilding period, all section leaders were communists. They were gradually replaced by analytic chemists and engineers. Some of these were trained abroad.
9. The plant had a labor force of about 2,500. Some of the persons of the plant were accommodated in the houses of a workmen's settlement which had been built by the Germans and was located in the western section of the plant. Some skilled workers were ethnic Germans, who had optioned for Poland. About 6 to 8 Soviet citizens worked at the plant. Source could not find out their actual functions. They were attached to various sections without executive power, were not over 40 years old, spoke perfect Polish, wore civilian clothes and tried to keep in the background. They were rather high-handed toward the Poles. The Polish workers warned the German engine fitters who were unable to tell these Soviets from the Poles. Source believed that they had poor technical knowledge and lacked practical experience.
10. The plant area was surrounded by a wire fence, 2.5 meters high. There were no watch-towers or searchlights. Each worker of the plant had a plant pass, which he had to produce on entering and leaving. Workers employed at the synthetic gasoline section, particularly those engaged in the regeneration of catalysers, needed special permits. Workers who had worked overtime needed a ticket, issued by their section head, which they had to hand to the sentry at the exit gate. The plant guards who wore black uniforms were unarmed. They had to perform internal duty, such as fire protection and guarding the warehouses. They had no executive rights. The official guard unit was the militia, which was armed with carbines. They patrolled the plant area and checked permits and driving orders of plant-owned motor vehicles. A secret police, whose members were not recognizable was at the plant, and shared the office with the militia. The plant had no AA armament.

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1. ☐ Comment. For sketch, see Annex.

2. ☐ Comment. Previous information indicated that the Poles had requested the State Secretariat for Electronic Power in East Berlin to prepare a project for a new power plant for the chemical plant in Oswiecim.

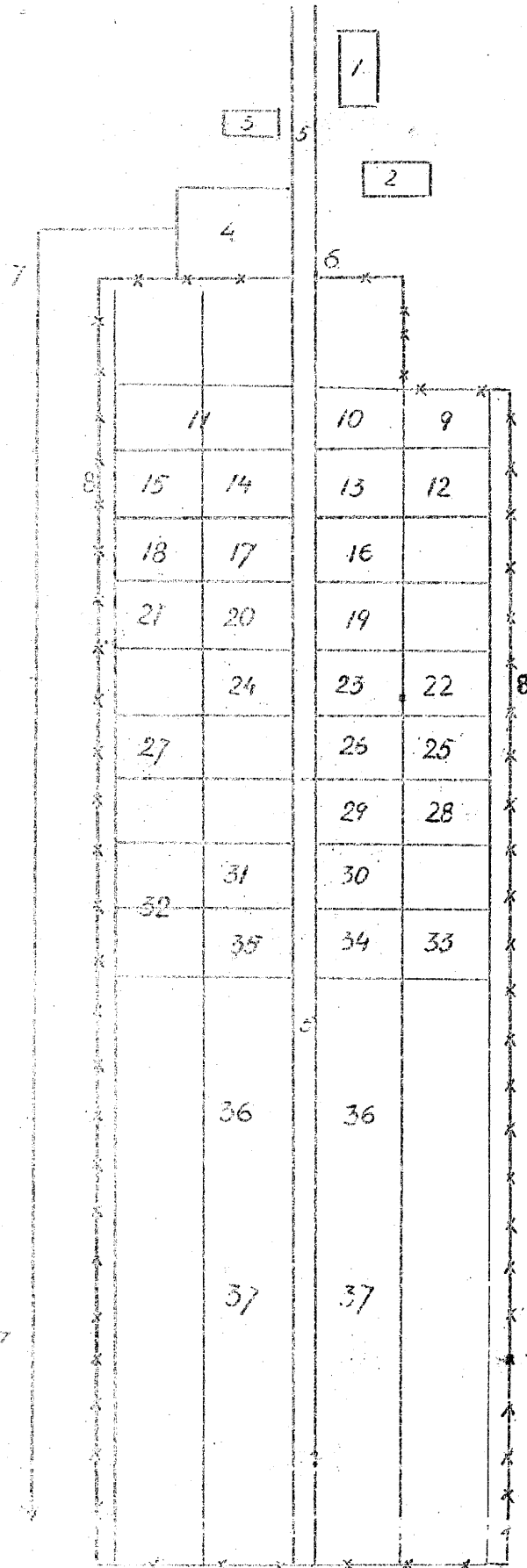
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. They also planned to order projects for a hydraulic plant at German design offices.

3. ☐ Comment. This plant which allegedly was the former Hugo-Huetten is believed to be the Czarna Huta chemical plant (Zaklady Chemiczne Czarna Huta), 1 ul. Ogrodowa, Tarnowskie Gory.

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Annex to



Legend: see next page

not to scale

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Annex to

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Legend

- 1 Central office
- 2 Dispensary
- 3 Fire brigade
- 4 Parking lot
- 5 Main west-east longitudinal road, called G-road
- 6 Entrance gate with guard house
- 7 Roundabout road south of the plant
- 8 Wire fence, 2.5 meters high
- 9 Low-temperature carbonization plant
- 10 Stone house and main laboratory
- 11 Gasoline synthetization plant
- 12 Coal dump
- 13 Low-temperature carbonization plant
- 14 Main workshop
- 15 store houses
- 16 Generator-gas plant
- 17 Destroyed buildings
- 18 Main engineering office
- 19 Power plant
- 20 Old cooling towers
- 21 Technical laboratory
- 22 Cooling towers
- 23 Workshop
- 24 Methanol plants
- 25 Acetylene plant
- 26 Chloric benzol plant
- 27 Scrap yard
- 28 Store houses
- 29 Trichlorethyl plant

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Annex to  
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- 30 Phenol plant
- 31 Transformer station
- 32 Scrap yard
- 33 Scrap yard
- 34 Old foundations
- 35 Old electrolytical plant
- 36 Chlorine and NaOH-depot
- 37 Shunting yard

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